



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, June 7, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that the Japan Society of Civil Engineers released an estimate today that the long-term economic damage of a Nankai Trough earthquake could be about 1,410 trillion yen in the worst-case scenario. TBS and TV Asahi gave top play to a report on a meeting between Secretary Pompeo and Foreign Minister Kono in Washington. NTV and Fuji TV led with reports on the suspicious death of a real estate mogul in Wakayama.

INTERNATIONAL

Secretary Pompeo, FM Kono confirm to urge DPRK to denuclearize

NHK reported this morning that Foreign Minister Kono met with Secretary of State Pompeo for about 25 minutes on Wednesday in Washington. The network said Kono received a briefing from the Secretary on the ongoing preparations for the first-ever U.S.-DPRK summit slated for June 12 in Singapore, adding that the two ministers reaffirmed the basic policy of calling for North Korea's complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization and imposing economic sanctions based on the UNSC resolutions. According to the network, they also agreed to meet again after the U.S.-DPRK summit. The network said Kono later briefed Prime Minister Abe, who had just arrived in Washington, on his meeting with Secretary Pompeo, adding that Kono is also expected to attend the U.S.-Japan summit on Thursday. On President Trump's remarks that he no longer wants to use the phrase "maximum pressure" against North Korea, Kono told reporters after the meeting: "I think it was a message to Chairman Kim Jong Un that he should respond in such a way that imposing maximum pressure will no longer be necessary." All commercial networks carried similar stories.

- [Japan, U.S. eye push for complete N. Korea denuclearization](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan may send nat'l security official to U.S.-N. Korea summit](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Kim made decision to denuclearize, rebuild economy: source](#) (The Mainichi)

- [Cartoon: Abe arrives for summit with POTUS](#) (Asahi)
- [OPINION: Japan needs a realistic proposal on the abduction issue](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

Number of self-proclaimed refugees on the rise

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported that more and more foreigners are working in Japan on "refugee visas," even though most of them are not from war-torn countries. Noting that only foreigners who have permanent residency status or working visas and those who are technical trainees or exchange students are allowed to work in Japan, the program said many apply for "refugee visas" after their trainee or student visas have expired in order to continue working in Japan. The program said small and mid-sized companies short of workers are hiring such foreigners while knowing that they are not refugees in the true sense. An expert pointed out the need for a new system that allows foreigners to stay and work in Japan longer.

- [Germany to seek united front with Japan over U.S. tariffs: Merkel](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan adopts strategy to bring U.S. back to multilateral trade frameworks](#) (Asahi)
- [Tokyo Gas holds ceremony to mark procurement of shale-derived LNG, confident of stronger Japan-U.S. cooperation](#) (SankeiBiz)
- [Editorial: Utilize American LNG to diversify procurement](#) (Nikkei)
- [U.S. trade deficit in April rises with Japan but falls with China](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on June 6, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe starts "diplomatic season" with eye on LDP presidential election in September](#) (Nikkei)
- [Shinjiro Koizumi calls for setting up special committee for Kake school scandal](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov't to make senior officials take courses on sexual harassment](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Aso's "political intervention" said to decide choice of vice finance minister](#) (Shukan Ekonomisuto)

SCIENCE

- [Japan enacts climate change adaptation law](#) (Jiji Press)

SECURITY

- [Editorial: China's attempt to change status quo in South China Sea unacceptable](#) (The Japan News)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

U.S. to pay compensation to Okinawa murder victim as "exception"

This morning's Okinawa Times front-paged the disclosure by several GOJ sources that arrangements are being made within the USG to pay compensation to the family of a woman who was murdered by a civilian U.S. base employee in Okinawa in 2016 as a "unique case." The Japanese government reportedly plans to pay the difference between the amount of damages

already determined by the local court and the figure to be presented by the USG in accordance with the existing mechanism called “SACO ex gratia payment.” According to the article, the USG can pay ex gratia payments for claims arising out of acts committed by U.S. military workers based on SOFA provisions. However, since this arrangement does not apply in this case because the perpetrator was not a direct hire of the U.S. military, the USG has reportedly decided to make the payment as an exception. The paper said this arrangement is “unprecedented.” According to the daily, in response to a request filed on Wednesday by several Okinawa prefectural assembly members for a quick settlement of the compensation dispute, Defense Minister Onodera urged the U.S. government to make a “political decision” by saying: “The U.S. side needs to make a decision on this matter.” The minister also reportedly disclosed that he personally asked Ambassador Hagerty and Defense Secretary Mattis to do so.

Ryukyu Shimpo ran similar stories, with an analytical piece speculating that the USG is inclined to pay compensation because the incident shocked the local community and became a major political controversy between the two nations that was even brought up at a U.S.-Japan summit a few months later. The daily expressed concern that if the compensation is made as an exception, local victims of future crimes by U.S. service members may not be compensated adequately. The paper stressed the importance of addressing the reality that the USG has discretion over compensation payments.

